



# AETC Bases News Clips

## Vance AFB OK



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### Garriott looks to the stars

**By Jeff Mullin**  
**Senior Writer**

Important visitors sometimes are given rides in jets at Vance Air Force Base. For most it is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Such was not the case for retired astronaut and Enid native Owen K. Garriott Friday when he took a ride in a T-38C piloted by 25th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot Capt. Ric "Midnight" Hoyt.

Garriott is himself a former T-38 instructor pilot and has logged more than 2,000 hours in the Talon.

"We did about every maneuver and maybe a few that are not," Garriott joked after his flight. "We did loops and barrel rolls and Immelmans and split-S's. We ran out of new ones to try. We had to start over again."

Garriott is back home to participate in the Space Station Imagination exhibit at Leonardo's Discovery Warehouse, which he helped found. He will greet visitors during "Space Adventure Day" today. At 11 a.m., visitors can have their pictures taken with Garriott.

Garriott also will celebrate his 73rd birthday today.

The exhibit is a mockup of the International Space Station. Garriott participated in two precursors to the ISS, Skylab and Spacelab.

Garriott spent 59 days, 11 hours and nine minutes in space on the Skylab 3 mission between July 28 and Sept. 25, 1973, then flew again 10 years later on Spacelab I, during which he was part of the first international crew aboard a shuttle mission. The shuttle in which he flew in 1983 - Columbia - tragically disintegrated on re-entry Feb. 1, putting the future of America's manned space program on hold.

America should return to space as soon as possible, Garriott said.

"We clearly have to get the orbiter back into flight in order to complete the construction of the space station," he said. "There are several of the heavy modules that are all prepared, built, tested, just waiting to be launched. We need to get the shuttle back in flight just as soon as we possibly can."

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In the next breath, however, Garriott said the shuttle's useful life is nearing an end.

"We need to get a replacement for the orbiter so it can be retired from its current activity of launching people and hardware together," said Garriott. "We need a smaller vehicle, now call-ed an orbital space plane. That will probably be a design capable of taking about four people back and forth to and from space."

The OSP, Garriott said, will have one important feature the shuttle fleet lacks - the ability to separate and fly away from the launch vehicle in case of an emergency.

"It's called a pad abort capability," he said. "We had that on Apollo, the Russians have had it forever, and we passed that opportunity up when we designed the orbiter some 25 years ago."

Garriott called the space shuttle "A very fine vehicle, a very reliable vehicle," despite the Challenger and Columbia disasters.

"We went over 85 flights without a catastrophe, without a mistake," said Garriott. "That's a good record. Unfortunately it's not good enough."

Garriott and all his fellow Skylab astronauts save one, Pete Conrad, who was killed in a motorcycle accident four years ago, gathered last week in Huntsville, Ala., to mark the 30th anniversary of Skylab.

When asked if the space program had come as far as he envisioned 30 years ago, Garriott said, "Easy answer, no. Thirty years ago we would have estimated that we would be well along our way to a Mars trip. Unfortunately, politics and the provision of money as the result of the politics, has hampered progress. We didn't have the NASA leadership that could make the case NASA needed more money."

Beyond completion of the International Space Station and the development of an orbital space plane, Garriott foresees manned space exploration reaching out beyond Earth orbit.

"I think beyond the next 10 years, we will certainly consider whether to go to the moon first or go on to Mars," said Garriott.

These days Garriott is an adjunct professor of University of Alabama-Huntsville, working in biological sciences.

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"That's a completely new discipline for me," said Garriott, who has a doctorate in electrical engineering. "The young folks are having to teach me something about biological sciences."

Garriott is involved with the study of microbes known as "extremeophiles," or those that thrive in extreme conditions, such as exist in Antarctica or at the bottom of the sea.

"Then we work in laboratory there to try to understand where they come from," he said, "and hopefully learn a little bit more about how they have evolved, give some clue as to whether or not they might even exist on other planets, and begin to explore, when we finally get out there, whether or not they might have come to the Earth or the Earth might have gone to them."

Garriott might spend his time on Earth these days, but his thoughts, it seems, are never far from space.



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### **91 homeowners to receive assistance with noise reduction**

**By Robert Barron**

Staff Writer

A total of 91 homeowners in Enid will receive assistance in making their homes quieter, according to a resolution by the Enid City Commission.

Enid Planning Administrator Chris Bauer said the homes are located in the Gray Ridge, Meadows and Richland Acres additions.

Homeowners to be assisted with the cost of improvements are in areas most affected by the noise created by aircraft taking off and landing at Vance Air Force Base.

Work that will be reimbursed is set out in a 1989 study by Wyle Laboratories, Bauer said. The study was commissioned by the Navy and Federal Aviation Administration and is used by the Air Force to determine how to quiet the noise created by Air Force planes.

Homeowners will be compensated for wall and attic insulation, door and window replacement, and storm doors and windows, Bauer said.

"The most effective is door and window insulation, according to Wyle," Bauer said.

Those measures also will help homes be more energy efficient, he said.

The homes in affected areas were determined by a March 2003 Air Installation Compatible Use Zones study.

The study is conducted by the Air Force periodically in communities near bases to determine the amount of noise aircraft are making at the base. The Enid study was done because new training aircraft will be arriving at Vance in the next couple of years. The T-6A will replace the T-37B and is scheduled to begin arriving at Vance in 2005.

Homeowners living in areas where the noise level is between 75 and 80 decibels will receive 75 percent reimbursement up to \$7,500, Bauer said. Those in the 70-75 decibel range will be reimbursed 60 percent, up to \$2,500.

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The Air Force study determined which homes were in the areas of highest decibel reading. The Vance Development Authority established a program to assist homeowners in those areas with improvements to reduce the amount of noise, and the program was approved by the Enid City Commission, which provides the funding.

Garfield County Assessor's Office provided the names of the property owners, and Bauer sent letters inviting them to a meeting to discuss the program.

Two meetings have been held do date.

"We'll see how things go. We have \$50,000 this year," Bauer said.

A total \$250,000 is available for the assistance, with a budget of \$50,000 a year for a five-year period.

One homeowner already has completed the abatement work on his home and submitted his bill to Bauer for reimbursement.

Between the two meetings, Bauer said he has talked to about 37 of the property owners and will continue the effort every year.

The AICUZ ordinance establishing the new zones will be on the city commission agenda Dec. 16 for approval.



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### **Bush signs off on \$15 million project at Vance**

Staff and wire reports

Vance Air Force Base will be out of the "red" in time for the next round of base closures in 2005.

President George W. Bush signed a \$9.3 billion military construction bill Saturday that includes \$15 million for a consolidated logistics center at Vance.

A member of Vance Development Authority and a statewide task force to protect Oklahoma's military bases said the Vance project will take care of the last "red-rated" infrastructure issue in advance of the next round of base closures.

"This was the last critical infrastructure need at the base," said Mike Cooper, former Enid mayor.

The logistics facility will bring together operations currently housed in 14 World War II-era buildings on the base. The logistics center will provide adequate space for processing and storage of aircraft spare parts, supplies, equipment, materials and furnishings.

Cooper said the new center will increase efficiency at the base, making it possible for Vance personnel to do a better job at things they already do well.

Design and engineering work on the logistics center should start after the first of the year, Cooper said.

"They'll try to fast-track that one because of the importance that it has," he said.

The logistics center will be added to an impressive list of construction projects at the base, including improvements to Elam Road, additional housing and a new T-1 hangar.

"It's a construction site at Vance Air Force Base," Cooper said of the projects totaling more than \$50 million.

Cooper said the jobs created by those projects and the materials purchased for them will have a major impact on Enid's economy, in addition to safeguarding Vance's future.

"It's a plus all the way around," he said.

Cooper said the latest project is coming because a large group of people have paid close attention to the base's needs.

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Vance officials let people involved in protecting its future know about such needs, then requests are passed along to the state's Congressional delegation.

Cooper said U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe fought to get the Vance project included in the Senate version of the military construction bill, while Rep. Tom Cole was "instrumental" in making sure it was part of the bill that came out of a conference committee. The project originally was not in the House version of the bill.

Cooper said Sen. Don Nickles and Rep. Frank Lucas also helped secure funding for the Vance project.

The total amount of the construction bill is \$1.4 billion below last year's level, but \$200 million more than Bush's request. Lawmakers added more than 100 projects for military facilities in their home districts - money that the president had not sought.

One of the final disputes that had delayed passage was resolved earlier this month when congressional bargainers agreed to split earmarks - money directed to specific home-district projects - 53 percent for the Senate and 47 percent for the House.

Earlier versions of the bill set aside roughly \$700 million for Senate projects and \$400 million for House earmarks.

The Vance project was part of more than \$96 million work of construction at Oklahoma military installations.

Other Oklahoma projects included in the bill are:

\$13 million for construction of a consolidated maintenance complex at Fort Sill, as well as \$3.5 million for a modified record firing range, \$2 million for an urban assault course and more than \$25 million for 120 new housing units.

\$1.4 million for C-17 modified simulator bays at Altus Air Force Base, as well as \$3.09 million for the privatization of 966 housing units.

\$19.06 million for building revitalization at Tinker Air Force Base in Midwest City, as well as \$14.3 million for a housing privatization project.

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## The Air Force Times



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# Despite Article 15, graduate of academy in pilot training

## Nonjudicial punishment doesn't alter career path

By Laura M. Colarusso  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

An Air Force Academy graduate punished for supplying alcohol to and fraternizing with an underage cadet has been sent to pilot training.

Second Lt. Ronen Segal found himself in the middle of a legal tempest this summer when he initially was charged with rape, forcible sodomy, dereliction of duty and conduct unbecoming. At a time when the Air Force was trying to prove it has zero tolerance for sexual assault because of a scandal at the academy, prosecutors tried to build a rape case against Segal that could have put him behind bars for the rest of his life.

Senior Air Force leaders were dealing with scores of current and former female cadets who since January have come forward to either the service or Congress to claim that they were sexually assaulted and the

academy's top officers ignored their pleas for help. One of those stories belonged to a sophomore cadet who said Segal got her drunk Aug. 25, 2002, at his home in Colorado Springs, Colo., and then had sex with her after she lost consciousness.

She testified at a July 2003 Article 32 hearing — the military equivalent of a pre-trial hearing — that she had at least three glasses of wine before passing out. She said she awoke to find him raping her.

Segal declined to comment. He received an Article 15 nonjudicial punishment for providing alcohol to a minor and fraternizing with a cadet, said Lt. Mike Andrews, a spokesman for the 21st Space

Wing, the entity with legal jurisdiction in the case. The specifics of the case remain undisclosed because of privacy reasons.

Air Force officials dropped the rape and sodomy charges, Andrews said.

Investigators found that the woman who claimed Segal had raped her could have withheld consent but "did not in any way object to or resist" the sex.

Despite the ordeal, Segal began pilot training Nov. 4, officials at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., confirmed. The female cadet is on administrative leave from the academy and has the option to return next year as a sophomore, said school spokeswoman

## BECOMING A PILOT

Air Force pilot candidates navigate this route to become pilots:

Joint specialized undergraduate pilot training.

This 52-week program prepares student pilots for all types of aircraft and flying missions.

UPJ classes graduate at Columbus Air Force Base.

Miss. Joint training is conducted at Vance Air Force Base, Okla., and Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Fla. Other students complete primary training at Columbus or Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

### Advanced training

After the primary phase of UPJ, students move to one of several tracks:

■ **Fighter-bomber assignments.** Flying the F-38A, students concentrate on low-level tactics, instrument procedures, ship formation flying and navigation training.

■ **Airlift-tanker assignments.** Candidates

fly the T-1A at Columbus, Laughlin and Vance.

They are introduced to crew resource management techniques, air-to-air refueling, airdrop missions and radar positioning and navigation.

■ **Helicopters.** Students complete training at Fort Rucker, Ala., in the UH-1 Huey, studying operational skills such as low-level flying and combat tactics training.

### Academic and military training

In addition to flying or training on simulators, students take academic classes and work on officer development, self-study and physical conditioning.

### Graduation

Officers receive their silver wings and the aeronautical rating of pilot. They attend follow-on training in their assigned aircraft at various bases.

### Pilot output

A total of about 1,100 pilots a year graduate from various training locations.

Capt. Lisa Neidinger. The Air Force Personnel Center selected Segal for pilot training before the rape allegation surfaced.

He was working at the Cheyenne Mountain tours and presentation office at the time of the Article 15.

are sending the wrong message in the wake of a sexual-assault scandal at the academy.

Selection to pilot training is highly competitive. Those who make it through are considered the best and the brightest. So how is it that an officer who arguably exercised poor judgment in giving alcohol to a minor is







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### Command decision

According to an Air Force statement, Segal's commander was responsible for making the decision to send him to pilot training.

"The determination of whether unfavorable information will prevent an officer from proceeding to [pilot training] is up to his or her commander," the written statement said. "In making determinations such as these, commanders are expected to consider all factors and the officer's entire record."

Maj. Gen. Kenneth DeCuir, Cheyenne Mountain Operations Center commander and a fighter pilot by trade, released Segal for pilot training, a spokesman for the center said.

Whether it is a rare occurrence that a student who makes it to pilot training has an Article 15 in his past is difficult to say.

The Air Force does not screen for nonjudicial punishment when considering a candidate, said Air Force spokeswoman Jennifer Stephens.

"Article 15s are generally considered rehabilitative in nature," the Air Force's statement further stated. "Nonjudicial punishment is not an automatic disqualifier for undergraduate pilot training."

### Voice of dissent

Nonetheless, the fact that Segal kept his slot has raised questions from victim advocates who wonder if Air Force leaders

in giving a honor to a minor is still the cream of the crop, asks Kate Summers, a victim advocate with the Miles Foundation, a nonprofit support group.

"It speaks to the military's response and the lack of justice that is provided to victims of sexual violence," Summers said of Segal's ability to keep his pilot-training slot. "A sexual assault is not routinely seen as a criminal act. The victim is often demonized."

Summers said her organization knows of a handful of accused rapists who went on to be promoted after receiving nonjudicial punishments.

Reaction to the case has been muted on Capitol Hill. Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo., an outspoken critic of how the Air Force Academy handled a string of rapes, has stayed mum on the issue.

Allard spokesman Dick Wadhams declined to comment on the case except to say that the senator "and other members of the Senate Armed Services Committee have expressed their strong concern regarding situations where a person who admitted to participating in a sexual assault remains in the military."

Calls to the staff of Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., were not returned. □

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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### **Votes good news for Vance's future**

Two votes by the Enid City Commission last week reaffirmed the close relationship between the city and Vance Air Force Base.

The commission approved a housing agreement that will help Vance enlisted personnel who need assistance as they are forced to live in town while 59 new on-base housing units are being constructed.

The Vance Housing Assistance Program provides qualified enlisted personnel with financial assistance to pay their rent while Vance replaces the base housing units. The new units are scheduled to be completed by February 2005. The housing program will cost some \$45,000 over 15 months.

The housing program is part of Vance Vision 2025, an ambitious plan for expanding and upgrading base facilities over the next two decades. The new houses not only will improve living conditions for personnel on the base, but should work in Vance's favor when the next Base Realignment and Closure round is held in 2005.

The commission also approved a transfer of money to help pay for noise reductions in the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ). The AICUZ study developed a set of noise contours around the base.

The noise reduction program developed by the Vance Development Authority will help home owners - whose homes fall within certain noise levels because of Vance aircraft flying overhead - pay for the cost of home improvements to reduce the impact of the noise. The cost of the program is \$250,000, to be spread over five years.

People whose homes are in the AICUZ zones will get money to help pay for improvements like new windows and doors, storm windows and doors and increased ceiling and wall insulation. The amount home owners receive will be based on the amount of noise caused by Vance jets in their neighborhood.

We think any investment in Vance is an investment in Enid's future. The noise reduction program will help make life more pleasant for residents living in the base's flight pattern, as well as enabling the base to continue its mission of training the next generation of American military pilots without interruption.

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Another bit of good news for the base came recently when the U.S. Senate unanimously approved a military construction appropriations bill that includes \$15 million for a consolidated logistics center at Vance.

The logistics facility, another element of Vance Vision 2025, will bring together operations currently housed in 14 World War II-era buildings on the base. The center will provide needed space for processing and storage of aircraft spare parts, supplies, equipment, materials and furnishings.

With an estimated direct economic impact of \$172 million, Vance is a driving force behind Enid's financial health. We applaud the actions of the commission and the Congress as positive steps toward assuring Enid and Vance will remain partners in the sky for many years to come.